

The Baptist Record

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

Acteen standout finds service demanding, inspiring

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Amy Hamilton has had a whirlwind of a summer so far, but she says she has enjoyed every minute of it — including her trip in mid-June as a National Acteen Panelist to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) meetings in Atlanta.

"It was inspirational. I had not been to a WMU national meeting or a Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting," said the blonde, 17-year-old member of Ecru Church in Pontotoc County. She is the daughter of Bush and Jannie Hamilton.

Hamilton's days in Atlanta

began early. She reported for duty at 6:30 a.m. and often worked past adjournment of the evening sessions.

In her various roles as page for the SBC sessions in the Georgia Dome, she managed a floor microphone, delivered motions and resolutions to the platform, attended the needs of news media in the press room, and saw to it that people on the platform received important messages.

She participated in the WMU national meeting next door to the Georgia Dome in the Georgia World Congress Center, and also found time for breakfast with

WMU executive director Dellana O'Brien and WMU president Carolyn Miller.

"It was tiring, but I enjoyed it very much," she said.

Hamilton was one of only six young women selected as panelists from across the Southern Baptist Convention, and there's a good explanation for that, according to Jan Turrentine, design editor for *Accent*, the Acteens magazine.

"The girls selected for the National Acteens Panel have an unusual grasp on ministry and witnessing. Their views of the world and its people are so refreshing and inspiring," Turrentine said.

Becky Nelson, WMU youth products editor, agreed with Turrentine.

"Each application (for panelist) was a portrait of a young person with a deep faith, a bold testimony, and a strong mission commitment. Their involvement in ministry locally and globally is an example each of us should follow," she said.

Hamilton will keep her title until the end of 1995. She has spoken to Baptist groups numerous times as a representative of Acteens, including the state WMU convention in Tupelo earlier this year. She has also been asked to write for *Accent*.

Amy is mindful of the people who went before her to make this recognition possible, and she is appreciative of those who have supported her along the way.

"I am thankful for Mississippi WMU, and for the strong WMU program in my church. I'll be a member of WMU as soon as I can," she said.



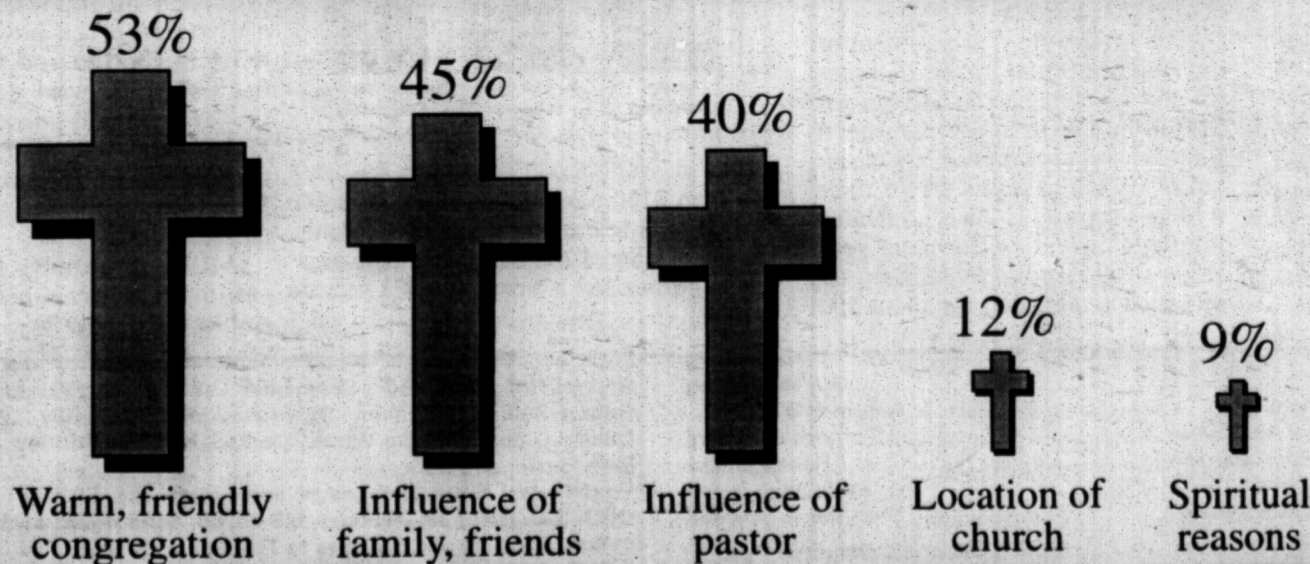
Amy Hamilton (above, left) of Ecru talks with fellow National Acteen Panelists after being presented June 19 at the national meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union in Atlanta. One of her responsibilities as panelist was to serve as a page (below) on the floor of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 20-22 in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta. (Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.)



Acteens Top Teens

A pair of Mississippi young women has been selected as 1995 Acteens Top Teens, according to the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in Birmingham, Ala. The Mississippians are Jennifer Ann Robbins (left), member of First Church, Sumrall, and Amanda Kate Richardson, member of Highland Church, Vicksburg. The 20 top teens are chosen each year from across the Southern Baptist Convention based on their Acteens involvement, Christian lifestyle, scholastic activities, and commitment to missions. They were featured in the June/July issue of *Accent*, the Acteens magazine.

Why do unsaved people join a church?



Looking Back...

10 years ago

Columbus native C.E. Autry, former director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board in Atlanta, is named outstanding alumnus by New Orleans Seminary.

20 years ago

The will of the late Robert E. Lee leaves a portfolio valued at \$450,000 to First Church, Batesville. He was the last in a long line of Lee family connections to the church that began when his father was called as pastor there in 1907.

50 years ago

Support builds for a hall of fame room in the new Baptist Building in Jackson where Baptist leaders, historical data from the Baptist Archives, and other material can have a place in Baptist life "worthy of proper exhibition."

Source: Home Mission Board Research Department

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Racial reconciliation in the SBC: Is there a backlash?

It was the 150th anniversary and Southern Baptists wanted to acknowledge our link to slavery and repent of it.

There was limited discussion on the motion. One messenger said it was inappropriate to apologize only to African Americans. What about the Native Americans?

Another messenger declared the resolution was too broad a condemnation on the great men who founded the denomination.

Yet another messenger thought the Historical Commission should study the resolution.

The 20,000 messengers would brook no delay. They voted and the racial reconciliation resolution passed overwhelmingly.

Now it appears there has been a backlash as time has afforded a closer look (See related article on page 3).

Secular newspapers and other news media covered the passage of the resolution extensively and commented fervently.

Charley Reese of Florida's

Orlando Sentinel called it a nice gesture and then said, "the bad part is apologizing for slavery which no living Baptist... has even been known to support."

Besides, how can one person apologize for what another person did?

The Clarion-Ledger of Jackson, in praising the resolution, editorialized that "the resolution should alert all denominations that there is more to Christian unity than mere words; deeds count, too."

Then the comments were heard from African Americans.

One group sees it as "open season" for the SBC to recruit the best black members and their churches.

Another group in Texas questioned the motives and sees it as "an attempt to recruit black churches."

Another black leader praised the SBC for the courage to make the apology, but wondered if personal and political agendas might have overtaken good intentions.

Another called it a "ploy," declaring that "Southern Baptist growth is flattening out, and I know how much numerical growth has meant to Southern Baptists."

Supposedly, our 150 years of history yields a great deal of evidence to support the suspicious attitude by the leaders of black churches.

Perhaps Southern Baptists were saying that we are trying our best to remove obstacles and make a smoother highway.

It is not the past 150 years but the future that will prove our sincerity.

Gary Frost, the first African American to serve as an SBC official (he is SBC second vice president) said, "Our nation is being ripped apart by hatred. I believe it's up to the church of Jesus Christ to begin the process of true reconciliation."

It is high time to overcome the past and work together to make a better climate for all people and all churches.

Annuity Board pays \$15 million per month; needs still go unmet

By Thomas E. Miller Jr.

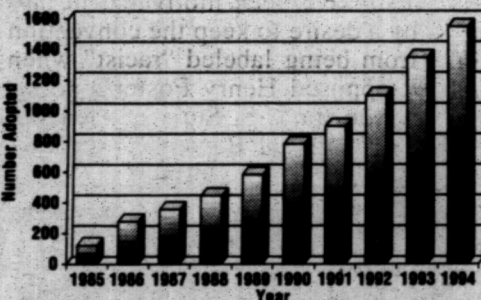
DALLAS — The Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention is paying out an average of \$15 million each month. Big money. In 1996 the annual payment total may exceed \$200 million.

Yet, nearly 5,000 retired ministers or their widows receive \$100 a month or less. Only 1,600 of the 25,000 annuitants in pay status receive more than \$1,000 a month. The low average of payments is a story of too little savings for too few years.

"Providing adequate benefits for all" is the theme of Annuity Board Sunday 1995. It is also a goal of the Annuity Board that requires marketing, education, and giving.

Because Southern Baptist congregations are autonomous, the board's retirement and insurance programs literally have to be sold to churches, agencies, ministers, and their employees. No one can compel a church to enroll its pastor. No one can order the minister to make adequate contributions for retirement.

A chain of annuity representatives in 19 state conventions —



The steady growth in Adopted Annuitants reflects both need and supply. It is estimated another 1,800 retired Southern Baptist ministers or their widows are living in poverty.

including Robin Nichols in Mississippi — supplement the Dallas Member Services and Fiduciary Services staffs in educational and promotional efforts. Beyond these human contacts, the Annuity Board carries on heavy direct mail promotion and growing tele-marketing programs.

"All of these are necessary," said Frank G. Schwall Jr. "We could never employ enough persons to cover the nation with one-on-one contacts." Schwall heads up a four-region Member Services Division that serves 39,000 churches and 1,200 associations.

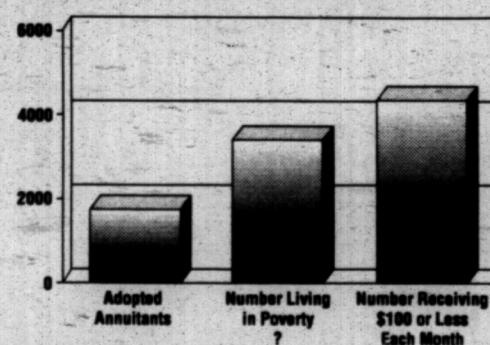
Some 73,000 persons have active retirement accounts at the Annuity Board, more than any other church pension fund in the world. Total assets are greater than any church fund except the United Methodists'.

Unlike most church pension boards, the Annuity Board has cultivated and retained institutional and agency accounts. Jim D. Morrison heads the Fiduciary Services work with 200 agencies and institutions including hospitals, colleges and universities, children's homes, and homes for the aging. Today, the number of participants in agency accounts is almost equal to the number in church accounts and total annual contributions of agency participants slightly exceeds that of church participants.

The Endowment Department of the Annuity Board fulfills that part of the Board's SBC Program Statement to educate Southern Baptists and solicit funds for assistance to retired ministers or their widows in need. The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program provides slightly over \$1 million, all of which is allocated for about 500

of the most needy. More than half of the Relief recipients receive no annuity because they never enrolled. Some do not even receive Social Security.

The Board's Adopt An Annuity ministry targets the estimated 3,400 retirees whose monthly income is below federal poverty level. The program currently provides an extra \$50 each month to more than 1,600 annuitants. Perpetual funding of an adoption is



Out of nearly 5,000 annuitants receiving less than \$100 a month, as many as 3,400 have incomes below federal poverty standards. The Annuity Board has designated gifts available to provide \$50 a month to 1,608 persons in 1995.

still beautiful and would last even longer, only it never marked the time. The sundial's real purpose had been thwarted.

The church thrives best in the storms as well as the sun. The Creator had a purpose for it. To overlay it with gold, or tradition, or to fill it with non-believers is to thwart its purpose.

— GH

THE FRAGMENTS

Finding the purpose

After many years of service the old missionary was retiring. He loved Africa and wanted to present a nice gift to the native village where he lived. He presented them with a beautiful sundial of brass and cement.

The people loved their missionary and treasured the sundial. In fact, they revered it so much they built a shed over it. It was

still beautiful and would last even longer, only it never marked the time. The sundial's real purpose had been thwarted.

The church thrives best in the storms as well as the sun. The Creator had a purpose for it. To overlay it with gold, or tradition, or to fill it with non-believers is to thwart its purpose.

— GH

possible with a gift of \$7,500. but most of the \$960,000 current annual cost must be raised each year from small gifts.

C. Joe McIntosh, who heads the Endowment work, estimates the \$80,000 per month now available meets less than half the need.

"There are 1,800 more we need to help," he said. "Pray that God will move in the hearts of his people to provide for these worthy souls."

Annuity Board total assets of \$4.5 billion reflect a growing awareness of the importance to save for retirement. This money will provide income far into the 21st century for persons still employed. Those who work the plans provided throughout their ministries or careers will retire in comfort and security. The ones who neglect preparation will struggle to make ends meet or become recipients of Convention Relief or Adopt An Annuity ministries.

Miller is Annuity Board senior vice president for public relations.

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Black religious leaders respond to racism apology

DALLAS (ABP) — The Southern Baptist Convention's resolution apologizing for racism — hailed by many as an instrument of healing — has created friction with some African-American Baptists not affiliated with the SBC.

The resolution is seen as a signal that it is "open season" for recruiting the best black church members into Southern Baptist congregations and for enlisting

predominantly black churches into the SBC, according to Caesar A.W. Clark, president of the Baptist Missionary and Education Convention of Texas.

That perception is both "widespread and well-founded," Clark said.

"Southern Baptists have been working overtime to win black National Baptists," said Clark, pastor of Good Street Church in Dallas, which is affiliated with the

National Baptist Convention U.S.A., a predominantly African-American convention.

In Port Arthur, Texas, an inner-city sports camp scheduled to begin June 26 was abruptly cancelled when the pastor of a leading black Baptist church in the neighborhood — who said he has "serious questions" about motives behind the SBC resolution — opposed the associational missions project.

"After all these years when Southern Baptists have suffered from the sin of silence, they finally have made this statement," said

U.S.A., with which Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church is affiliated, had publicly endorsed Foster's ill-fated nomination.

Randy Vaughn, pastor of Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church in Port Arthur and executive vice president of the Texas State Missionary Baptist Convention.

"My curiosity is aroused. I have to wonder what they

are trying to get to by making this statement. Is it part of an attempt to recruit black churches into the Southern Baptist Convention? Who will be strengthened and benefited? It raises serious questions. I don't know the answers."

"Our desire," said Gary Frost, SBC second vice president and a black pastor, "is to evangelize the black community, not to proselytize black church members."

"It appears to be the perception of some that Southern Baptists will be coming after their church members, taking away members of their flocks."

Vaughn said he knows of some black churches that have been attracted to the SBC by the organizational resources available and by the financial benefits to pastors. For some, affiliation with Southern Baptists has worked well, but others have felt "entrapped," he said.

Vaughn also wondered aloud if the convention resolution might also have been motivated in part by a desire to keep the convention from being labeled "racist" when it opposed Henry Foster's nomination for U.S. Surgeon General. The National Baptist Convention

"After all these years when Southern Baptists have suffered from the sin of silence, they finally have made this statement."

— Randy Vaughn
Port Arthur, Texas

Joe Saffle, pastor of First Church, Port Arthur, said he supported the resolution apologizing for racism, but he understands how black Baptists could perceive it differently than it was intended.

Frost, who was re-elected

SBC second vice president at the recent convention, said the only intent of the Convention's resolution on racism was "to be honest before God in regard to our past and to repent."

"I can only speak to what is in my heart, but my heart's desire is not to enlarge the Southern Baptist Convention," he said. "It is to enlarge the kingdom of God."

White Southern Baptists need to create one-on-one relationships with black church leaders outside the SBC in order to break down barriers of ignorance and mistrust, said Frost, pastor of Rising Star Church in Youngstown, Ohio.

"One of the major stumbling blocks is a lack of trust on the part of black Christians and a lack of knowledge on the part of white Christians," he said. "The white Christians just don't understand. The black Christians have been deceived so many times, had so many false promises made to them, that they don't trust anymore."

"I would say to the black brethren in the National Baptist Convention churches and other bodies, 'Let's see if we can work together. Give it a chance.'"

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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FMB, world ministry group sign cooperative covenant

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — A covenant pledge between the Foreign Mission Board and a fellowship of overseas missions ministries has been signed to help focus more volunteer resources on strategic overseas missions needs.

The covenant will help groups affiliated with the Fellowship of Baptist World Ministries better support the board's goals overseas. The FBWM is a fellowship of autonomous groups, led by Southern Baptists, that conduct different types of overseas missions ministries, primarily evangelistic and human needs projects. Their ministries regularly involve thousands of Southern Baptist volunteers in overseas projects.

The covenant calls for the Foreign Mission Board to help fellowship groups organize projects around strategic board field requests. FMB President Jerry Rankin and fellowship President Jim Ponder signed the document June 20 during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta.

"Here's a group of Southern

Baptists who have a heart for a lost world," Rankin said. "We're committed to partnership with them and to mobilizing all the resources of Southern Baptists to fulfill the Great Commission. We can all be more effective by working together cooperatively. That's why we've reached out and made this covenant."

Fellowship of Baptist World Ministries groups also recognize the value of plugging into mission board plans, said Ponder, head of Jim Ponder Ministries, Orlando, Fla.

"We want to reach as many people for God as we can and use our talents in the best way for God and the work of Baptists," he said. "We're all Southern Baptists and supportive of the Foreign Mission Board. These covenant guidelines will enable us to better meet needs around the world in support of the board's missionary purpose."

"It gives us an opportunity to say that we're in this together, that we want what we do to be a strengthening blessing to the Foreign Mission Board."

Rankin's signature reflects the board's desire to cooperate with God by helping Southern Baptists answer his call to overseas missions, said Avery Willis, the board's senior vice president for overseas operations.

"Coordinating our efforts will help us get maximum strategic benefit from autonomous groups that take people overseas," Willis said. "We believe this will greatly facilitate cooperation and improve results on the field."

"God is moving in the hearts of these people and the volunteers who go with them," Willis said. "We want to facilitate what God is doing among them and on the fields where we work."



Graham addresses Southern Baptists

Evangelist Billy Graham (right photo, seated left) is escorted from the Georgia Dome in Atlanta by SBC President Jim Henry (right photo, seated right) after addressing the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (left photo) on the morning of June 22. Graham, who battled health problems that hospitalized him in Canada shortly before his appearance in Atlanta, told convention messengers of his love for Southern Baptists and urged them to continue efforts to evangelize the world. He received several standing ovations from the messengers. (Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.)

June SBC gifts to CP up for month and year

NASHVILLE (BP) — Cooperative Program gifts for the month of June rose 16.84% above the same month a year ago and pushed the fiscal year-to-date totals more than 2.5% above the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

June 1995 gifts totaled \$12,719,960 compared to June 1994 of \$10,886,499, or an increase of \$1,833,461. After nine months of the SBC fiscal year, the total CP gifts stand at \$109,314,279 compared to the previous year of \$106,599,758 or an increase of 2.55% or \$2,714,520.

Designated gifts also rose in June, a whopping 35.25% over the previous year's June: \$15,919,773 compared to \$11,770,875 or an increase of \$4,148,898. The totals for the fiscal year-to-date for designated gifts now stands at 2.09% ahead of the previous year's total: \$121,703,728 compared to \$119,209,105 or an increase of \$2,494,622.

Raymond messenger's prayer answered with a rose and hug

ATLANTA (BP) — The 150th anniversary meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta was the first convention Wanda Kay Wigley had ever attended.

A petite woman with a gentle voice, Wigley rarely ever had spoken in public when she stepped up to a microphone Wednesday and made two motions in front of 20,000 people assembled for the morning business session.

Her first request concerned prayer, asking the Southern Baptist Convention to start a new work called "Prayer Missionaries."

Originally from Raymond, Wigley serves as Mississippi's state coordinator for the National Day of Prayer. A member of Raymond Church, she also asked in her motion for messengers to the SBC to consider sponsoring one national day of prayer just for Southern Baptists.

Undaunted by her shaking knees and quivering voice, she proceeded to make another request, "because God put it on my heart to ask for this," Wigley said. She asked to be allowed personally to meet Jim Henry, SBC president, and Billy Graham, internationally known evangelist, scheduled to

address the SBC in the final session Thursday morning, June 22.

Although hundreds of such requests are received each year, SBC officials were touched by Wigley's earnestness and sincerity.



Billy Graham (left), Jim Henry (center), and Wanda Kay Wigley.

ty and responded to her final request without the usual convention procedures.

Wigley, a single mother, received a rose that evening from Jack Wilkerson, vice president for

business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee. Although he didn't explain why, Wilkerson told Wigley to appear at a certain time and place the next morning.

Thursday morning Wigley arrived hours early to pray in the prayer room as she had done each previous day of the convention.

She left the prayer room and, as instructed, arrived at the preset time and place. That's when Graham and Henry walked by on their way to the stage.

"When I was a teenager, people used to mock me as I tried to be a witness for my Lord," Wigley said. "They called me 'Little Miss Billy Graham.' The Lord put it on my heart to ask to be allowed to meet him and Dr. Henry. I told Dr. Graham, 'I love you.' I am so thankful that God has answered my prayer in this way," she said.

Graham greeted Wigley with a hug and a quick kiss on the cheek just before he stepped onto the platform to speak for the final session of the SBC. Henry gave her a hug.

"I don't remember what either of them said to me. I was so in awe. I was so thankful to the Lord," she said. "I just know they were so kind."

Health Awareness Week scheduled in Mississippi River Ministry area

Baptist medical volunteers will host Health Awareness Week July 17-21 in Coahoma and Quitman Counties as part of Southern Baptists' Mississippi River Ministry program to minister to the poor in the multi-state area surrounding the river.

The event is being sponsored by North Delta Association in Clarksdale, Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), and the state chapter of the Baptist Nursing Fellowship (BNF). North Delta Association will serve as headquarters.

"This will represent the first medical involvement for us in the Mississippi River Ministry," reported Ashley McCaleb, BNF coordinator in the Mississippi WMU Department.

A clinic will be set up each day to see patients from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with tests offered for anemia (poor blood condition), cholesterol, diabetes, and hypertension (high blood pressure). Eye examinations and manual breast checks will also be conducted.

A supervised area for children will be available while parents are in the clinic.

The clinic will rotate between four locations for patient convenience:

— Tuesday, July 18: Oakhurst Church in Clarksdale.

— Wednesday, July 19: Old school gym in Coahoma.

— Thursday, July 20: Masonic Hall in Friar's Point.

— Friday, July 21: Community house in Marks.

Displays and health information from such groups as the Crisis Pregnancy Center, Diabetes Association, and Heart Association will also be available at the clinic.

"We appreciate all who have volunteered their time and skills to make this week possible. Let us pray daily for our concerted efforts on behalf of Christian medical service," McCaleb said.

To volunteer for the Health Awareness Week or get more information on the event, contact McCaleb at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Simpson Co. pastors at SBC

Kermit McGregor (left), pastor of First Church, Mendenhall, and Karl Tingle, pastor of Goodwater Church, Magee, share a lighter moment in front of the New Orleans Seminary exhibit in Atlanta's Georgia World Congress Center during the June 20-22 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. McGregor and Tingle served as convention messengers from their respective churches in Simpson County. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



Missions talk

Alvin Doyle (left) of Picayune, Southern Baptist missionary to Nigeria, discusses mission service with Sandra Nash of Clinton, president of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), between sessions of the national meeting of the WMU in Atlanta on June 19. Doyle and wife Mary dressed in traditional Nigerian clothing to explain their field work to the people gathered for the WMU meeting in the Georgia World Congress Center, next door to the Georgia Dome where the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention convened on June 20. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

My adult son vowed to break up my marriage to his stepfather, and it certainly appears he's trying his best. How should I handle this?

Your son is having a big temper tantrum. Ignore him until he settles down. He obviously has a hurt or need that is unmet, but his method of getting the hurt or need met is not appropriate and should not be allowed. After a time, try writing letters and cards, or talk with him about your feelings. He may not listen and may even reject you, but if you remain steadfast and available he may come around with time. Listen to him and do not become defensive or try to convince him that his reasoning is wrong. When appropriate, voice your feelings and your viewpoint on this situation. Don't try to out-talk or out-think him. You don't have to win him over; you only have to let him know your heart. By all means, pray for him and ask the God of peace to take control of this situation.

At times I want to remain

single, and at times I miss the company and comfort of a spouse. I'm approaching 50 so I don't have a lot of time left. What should I do?

As you consider your decision, remember James 1:5 — "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault...." God is definitely interested in all aspects of our lives, including with whom we yoke ourselves. Make a list of characteristics you would like in a spouse and then use the list as a measuring rod. Your list should be a list of positive characteristics you want in a spouse, not a list of negative characteristics you don't want. Be sure that what you seek is companionship and friendship, and not someone to fill a void in your life where God should be. You are not certain whether you want a spouse, which is even more reason to be alert to the Lord's leadership. Talk to other Christians who have had a similar experience and get their opinions on what you should do.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.